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K'un Ming lamps is part of the general celebration of the time, an appropriate custom, like decorating a house with holly at Christmas in England, which has no avowed connection with the purely religious ceremonies of the festival.

One of the principal festivals connected with Ancestor Worship among the Chinese, is Ch'ing Ming, "Pure Brightness" a day corresponding with April 5th, or a date not far removed, according to the variations of the Lunar Calendar. This is the occasion when tombs are swept and repaired and good luck charms pasted on them, while the family holds a kind of ceremonial picnic party at the tombs in which the spirits of the ancestors are supposed to share. Among the Min Chia this custom is observed in a somewhat different manner. The actual date of Ch'ing Ming is in no way especially honoured, but at about the same time of year, April, when the days are warm and the rains have not yet begun, parties called *dso mu* "(going) up to the graves" are held. The graves at Ta Li and in the Ta Li district are invariably placed on the lowest slopes of the mountain, above the belt of cultivable land, and never among the actual fields[1]. Consequently to go to the graves is to go "up".

On any fine day in April, the Lunar Third Month, a family may decide to *dso mu*. Food and cooking utensils are loaded on to donkeys or carried by porters, rugs and cushions are brought, and the whole party starts out about eleven in the morning, the men walking together in front, the women trailing along behind, while the aged or infirm of either sex may ride a donkey or a pony. Guests not members of the family, nor even related to it, are invited, and the party may number as many as fifty people, children included. The graves are perhaps distant some two or three miles from the

[1] An exception is made for those drowned in the lake. They are buried on the foreshore among the willow plantations which fringe the lake, never with the rest of the family on the mountain.

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764 was given by the Generalissimo, General Chiang Kai-shek, and written by General Lung Yun, Governor of Yunnan, the deceased having been a military officer of rank.[1]

Not every deceased member, even of a wealthy family has so elaborate a resting place. Those who do not survive to marry and leave children are not buried in the principal family graveyard, but on the lowest slopes, where their monuments are more simple and less enduring. Young children or babies are buried with little ceremony on pieces of vacant land near the city wall, and their graves are soon obliterated by weather and decay. Even the poor, however, try to raise money for a tomb which will remain, though they cannot afford dressed stone and must be content to have a monument of piled blocks of undressed granite. The cattle which graze on these slopes break down such tombs before long, and even the elaborate monuments of the wealthy of an earlier age are found in every state of ruin. Yet well built tombs of the fifteenth century, the Ming Dynasty, are still intact, their inscriptions legible and, when they have descendants living, repaired and maintained.

The earliest dated private tomb which I was able to locate had an inscription of the year A.D. 1426, and this was still in good repair. Such a tomb to-day would cost not less than 200 Silver dollars, and the least expense if dressed stone is used would be 50 Silver dollars, a heavy cost for the poorer classes.

766 Suicides, and criminals executed by the authorities, are not buried with the family. The former are interred at the base of the mountain on common land, and the latter are simply and crudely buried on the public fair ground outside the West Gate, where the low mounds which cover them are soon trodden down and obliterated. In accordance with

[1] This distinction is equivalent to a decoration; no doubt the Generalissimo has secretaries who compose these couplets for such purposes, as he can hardly have the leisure to do so himself.

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the belief that drowned persons have been claimed by the Dragon of the Lake, the recovered corpses of those who lose their life in this way are buried on the foreshore, among the willows which line the water. They are given elaborate tombs if they were fathers of a family, just as if death had not been due to drowning, but they are never buried with the family on the mountain slopes. Graves are always orientated in accordance with the instructions of a geomancer, but they invariably face the lake at some angle, and are never faced towards the mountain. The orientation of graves is believed to be intimately connected with the repose of the dead, and if misfortune falls upon a family, or the ghost of the deceased is believed to walk, it is attributed to wrong orientation of the grave, and the monument is reconstructed accordingly.

In all parts of China the Lunar New Year, which falls early in February, is the principal holiday in the calendar, and is celebrated by feasting and festivity. It is usual for shops to close, formerly for as long as two weeks, and even now very little business is done in the first half of the First Month. The 15th of the 1st Month, the last day of the Feast of Lanterns, was the old official end of the holiday season, a period which very much resembles the Christmas holidays of western Europe. In just the same way the New Year holiday is a time for family reunions, a festival in which the religious background is not so prominent as the secular feasting and holiday making. In Ta Li the Min Chia celebrate the New Year with rites, which though they may be affected by Chinese practice in the past, are now strange to Chinese visitors from the eastern provinces. These rites are performed privately in the home and are therefore akin to the Shu Pao ceremonies of Ancestor Worship described above. It is characteristic of Min Chia practice, however, to find Buddhist elements incorporated in the ceremony.

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764 Chinese influence is strong. In more remote places cremation is
177 still the most common method.

At Lung Ch'i Chai there is a flat stone near the place of
764 cremation. The coffin is placed on this stone while the relatives perform a funeral dance. Then the coffin is carried to the place of cremation while the priest chants the sacred songs. The relatives weep while the coffin and the corpse are burnt to ashes. A bowl or jar is broken and the fragments are thrown inside. Next morning, after the fire has cooled down, the relatives come and gather the ashes and deposit it in the large tomb near by.

764 At Lung Ch'i Chai there is a common grave which on the
349 outside looks much like a Chinese tomb. On the outside there is one large opening or door, and inside there are two. These doors are never closed. The cremation is done in two wooden sheds near by, which are in a poor state of repair. The ashes of the men and boys are placed on the right—on the left as one faces the outside door from the inside—which is the place of honor, and the ashes of the women and girls are deposited on the left. The ashes of a great many people have been deposited here.

The crematory houses are small roofed buildings about ten feet square. This is set on a stone base that rises about a foot from the ground. The sides are not boarded up, but consist of small upright posts a few inches apart, and large posts on the corners. Before the cremation takes place, eight or more men lift the entire building off its hinges and deposit it at one side. After the cremation it is again set into place. One or more families use the same crematory house, and there are several such houses near each village.

●766 A baby is often not formally buried or cremated, but simply covered up in a hole in the ground.

764 Near Ts'a To and Ho P'ing Chai small crematory houses, varying in size according to the financial ability of the family, are sometimes built and burnt with the coffin and the corpse inside. There is a funeral dance, and the priest chants and performs his sacred ceremony.

766 People who die violent and unnatural deaths—women who die
995 in childbirth, and men and women who fall over a cliff, are drowned, are killed by wild animals, are poisoned to death or die by hanging, become demons. These are cremated even in villages where burial in tombs has become common, and the priest performs a ceremony by which he encloses the demon inside a jar, after which it is taken

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to a crossroads and the jar is buried upside down. The jar is covered by paper, and priests have told the writer that the paper moves because the demon is jumping about inside. During cremation, in some villages, two wooden birds are placed on the coffin. They are rescued and carried away to the homes of the rescuers.

When a person dies there is present a poisonous breath called *an ch'i* 暗氣. To offset its effects and to keep away demons a cockerel is sometimes killed and its blood sprinkled on the door-posts.

V. *Religion.*

1. The Future Life.

The Ch'iang have not a very definite idea of the future life. Some say that hades is below and that it is a dark and shadowy place. They have heard the Christian teaching about heaven and hell, and that of the Buddhists and Taoists about hell and Western Paradice. Their idea of the soul does not seem to be very clear. There are few if any memorial customs excepting those that were influenced by the Chinese. They say that they love and revere their ancestors, living and dead. Said one, "If we offer food or burn spirit money, what good does it do? If we offer food or wine, they cannot eat or drink it. Spirit money when burnt turns into smoke." Some believe in reincarnation. Many commemorate their ancestors on the fifth day of the fifth moon or the fifteenth day of the seventh moon. Some worship their ancestors in their homes on the first, fifteenth, and thirtieth of each lunar month.

2. The World View.

These people live on the sides and tops of high mountains, or in narrow valleys. The climate is cool and comparatively dry. Near them live the powerful Jia Rung, the Wa Ssu, the Hei Fan, and the fierce Heh Shui, Luh Hua, and Bolotzu. Wild animals live in the forests and attack human beings, the crops, and the domestic animals. There are floods and droughts. People fall over the cliffs or drown in the streams. Lightning strikes trees and houses, and sometimes kills people or animals. Earthquakes shake down houses, rolling stones kill or injure people, and pestilences sweep the country killing men and domestic animals. The Ch'iang are not

2: Rock K-5 (1934-) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16
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none of the peaceful peasants having the money to pay for them. They were old ex-German army rifles dating from 1870, and the Wa-li Tsung-pan, Ch'en, sold them with 25 rounds of ammunition for 100 to 120 dollars silver apiece.

5. THE BURYING ALIVE OF A LO-LO LEPER

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I shall here describe the burying alive of a leper in the district of the Lang-ch'ü T'u-ssu 瀧遮土司, where a divisional magistrate resided, besides the Mo-so T'u-ssu, neither of whom was able to prevent such a method of disposing of a live leper.

The male leper in question was well advanced with the disease when his relatives decided to bury him alive. He was taken to the top of a grassy hill, accompanied not only by his relatives, but also by his village neighbors, for such an occasion is always one of feasting and drinking. An ox had been killed and skinned, the wet skin was spread out, hair down, on the top of the grassy hill, and the leper was seated in the center of the skin. He was fed plentifully with beef, and was given sufficient quantities of strong liquor, brewed from grains, to make him intoxicated. Both relatives and friends gorged themselves on the beef and drank great quantities of liquor as only a Lo-lo can.

In the meantime a large circular hole had been dug not far from the spread-out skin on which the leper sat in a dazed condition. A large wooden tub had also been prepared and placed near the hole. The relatives then sat around the ox hide and the leper and began their lamentations, telling him that the time had come for him to leave, and that there was no way out, but that now he had to depart to the land of his ancestors. They wept and howled, interspersing their lamentations with draughts of strong drink, of which also the poor leper had to partake freely. He was consoled with the fact that he had been well feasted and given plentifully of strong drink. Finally, after the feasting was over, a last draught of liquor in which opium had been dissolved was given the poor leper, whose last minute had now arrived.

As soon as he had swallowed the poisoned drink, relatives rushed to the four corners of the ox hide and in an instant he was tied and securely sewn into the skin, ere his last breath should leave him. It was of great importance to them that he should not die before being securely tied in the wet ox hide. He was then quickly lifted into the wooden tub, and the latter was placed into the prepared hole in the ground. All hands worked feverishly for he had to be buried before life had become extinct in his ox hide prison. The tub was quickly covered and in addition a large cooking pot was put over it inverted, and the hole filled with earth, while the village Pe-mu, or sorcerer, chanted from a Lo-lo manuscript, entitled *Nunv ndü nunv p' nunv ngü yi*, the meaning of which is "Close the road of the demon of leprosy." This demon is called Nunv. The deity Ra-sa, of which a picture occurred in the book, who alone is able to suppress Nunv, the demon of leprosy, was thus invoked, during the burial of the leper, to close the road of the demon. It is believed that should the leper die before being tied up in the ox hide and before burial, that is, should his last breath escape, it would return to

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the village and give leprosy to his relatives; hence the custom of burying lepers alive. The burial over, all returned to their homes.

6. PAI-CHIO SILVER MINE

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The one feature of interest in Pai-chio-pa and the Lang-ch'ü T'u-ssu's domain is the silver mine in Pai-chio Shan (Pai-chio Mountain). The Yung-pei Records, ch. 1, fol. 18b, have the following to say about this mine:

"The Pai-chio Mountain is in the district of Lang-ch'ü and borders on the district of the Chang T'u-ssu [Yung-pei district]; the mountain extends part-way into Ssu-ch'uan, that is into the magistracy of Yen-yüan. On the top as well as at the foot of the mountain there are outcroppings of silver ore. In the 11th year of Tao-kuang (1831), Sub-prefect Wu Chao-t'ang 吳兆棠 submitted a report which was approved, whereupon he began operating the mine and paid taxes to the government. The mine was called Tung-sheng ch'ang 東昇廠, also Pai-niu ch'ang 白牛廠. At that time they saw a white cow at that place, whereupon they obtained silver [the legend says that only as much silver as corresponds to the leg of a cow has been mined, meaning that there is a large amount still unmined], hence the name Pai-niu ch'ang (White cow mine). In the 25th year (1845) gold was found in the silver, which was separated from it. Mining is still going on to this day."

Mining operations have, however, ceased, not on account of lack of ore, but on account of the foul air in the mine, which prevents workers from remaining in it. They are unacquainted with ventilating methods.

In another part of the Yung-pei Records ch. 2, fol. 48a, it relates that after the mine had been opened they kept five to six boilers (池) or smelters going [the word *ch'ih* 池 stands for a container of liquids, but the Records do not state how much ore could be melted in one of them]. It does say, however, that out of every *ch'ih* from 50–60 Chinese ounces of silver were obtained when the ore was good, and never less than 10 ounces. After many years of mining the ore became less and less productive and in the end contained little silver.